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MAP I

Sketch-map of Malekula.

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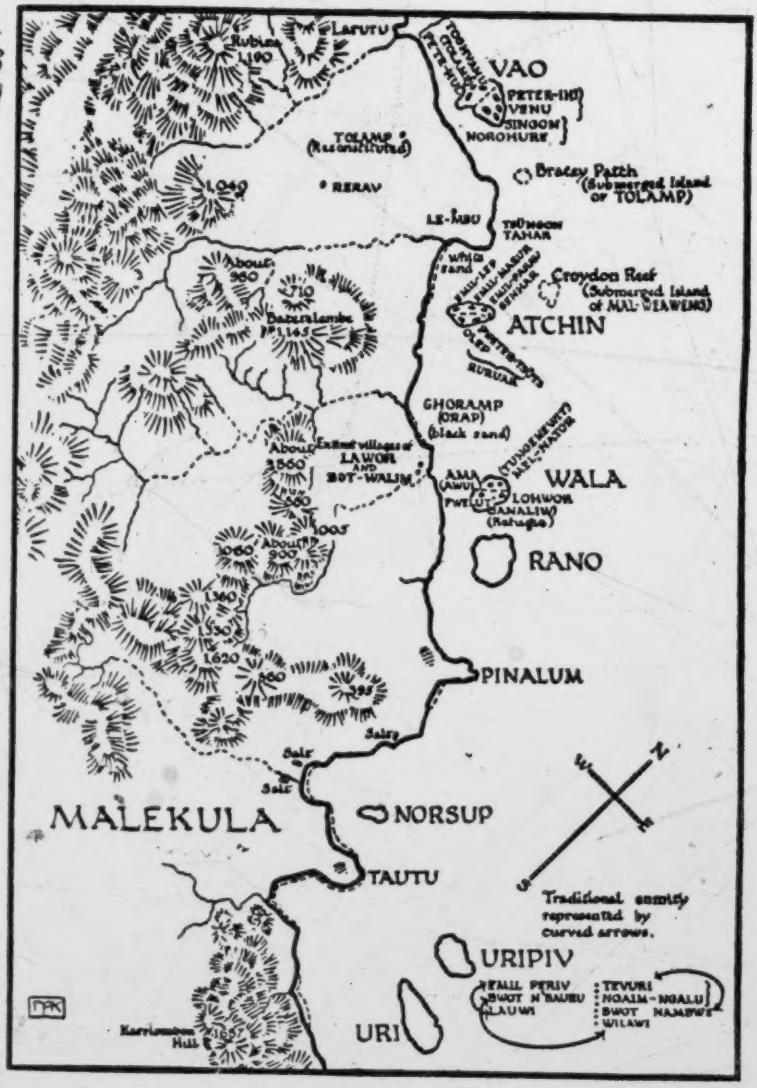

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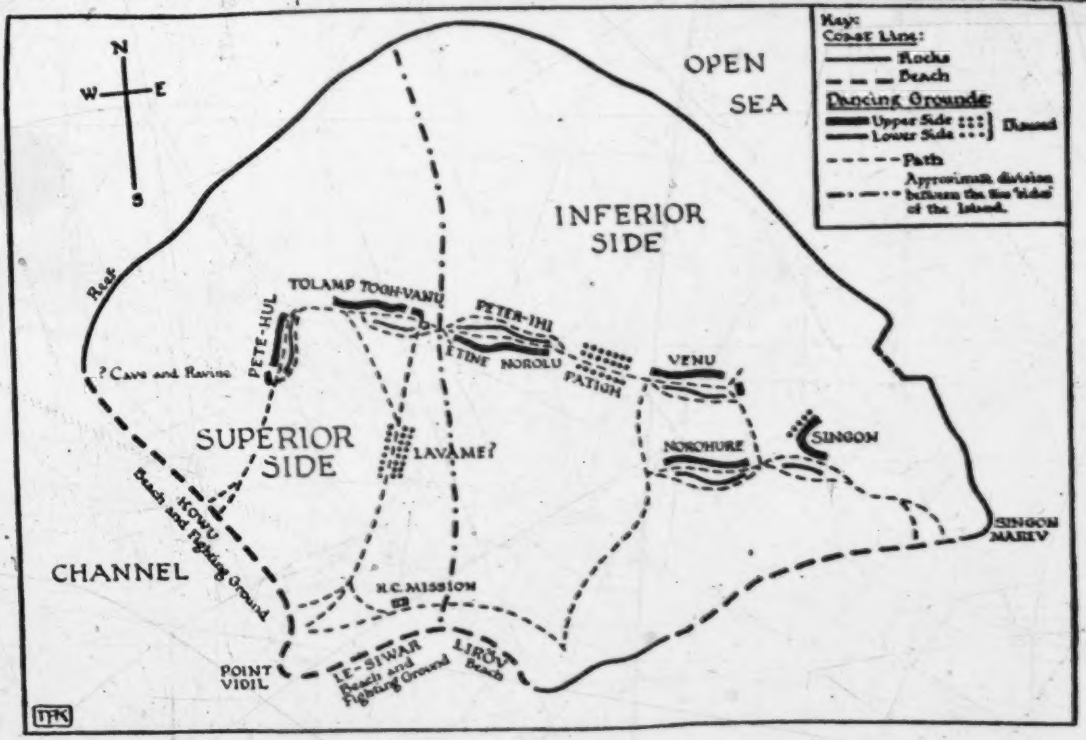
MAP II

Sketch-map of the Small Islands.



MAP III

Sketch-map of Vao marking the position of the six village dancing-grounds and the division of the island into two asymmetrical Sides, the Superior Side containing the double-village of Pete-hul–Togh-vanu (as well as the refugee community of Tolamp), and the Inferior Side the two double-villages of Peter-ihi–Venu and Singon–Norohure. The map also indicates the position of the main beaches and of the paths leading to them, with the exception of that leading from Peter-ihi, which was not recorded.

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main way broadening out to become the dancing-ground itself, of which the sanctity is proclaimed by the dolmens and monoliths that line its sides, the women's path going parallel to it behind what is termed the "Lower" Side. Once past the dancing-ground, the women's path again joins the great way, which then proceeds to the next village dancing-ground, where it once more divides. In this way the men's path traverses all the main dancing-grounds on the island, each of which has in addition its own way down to its own beach, divided at the shoreward end into a men's path sanctified by the presence of a stone wall on which sacrifices have been performed, and a women's path marked only by the track which they have themselves made.

Dancing-ground of Pete-hul.

If we now follow the way inshore from Kowu we find ourselves in a minute valley, the ground gently rising on either side. After a minute or two fences appear, indicating the proximity of houses. A little further on the path widens, on the left a great banyan tree raises its mighty branches from which innumerable aerial roots redescend into the ground, and we find ourselves in the midst of an arena which is the dancing-ground of the chief village of Pete-hul. This arena is scooped out of the head of the shallow valley we have been following, which here widens, and then closes again. The tiny declivity would be almost unnoticeable were it not for the hand of man that had converted it into a place of unforgettable memory.

The whole surface of the ground with its mixture of volcanic dust is scrupulously weeded, and provides an incomparably soft yet firm and resilient medium for processional and other dances. Both sides of the dancing-ground are lined with the stone monuments set up during successive Maki rites, but these sides differ in that the monuments on the left, or what in native terminology is called the "Upper" Side, are incomparably the more magnificent. Opposed to these are the comparatively insignificant stones lining the "Lower" Side behind which runs the path taken by the women, who, as stated, may not set foot on the dancing-ground proper except on stated occasions. In the lay-out of any such ground, if the land rises on either side this will invariably be chosen as the "Upper" Side, thus demonstrating the correlation between physical and spiritual height, which is a marked feature of all New Hebridean ritual. The terms "upper" and "lower" are primarily of a social and spiritual nature, and it is on the Upper Side that the chief sacrifices are made by men of high rank, those on the Lower Side being carried out only by young men and boys who have not yet, through sacrifice of the nobler grades of tusked boar, completely established their independence from the uninitiated women whose path lies immediately behind it. For men dominate society, and only those men who have performed the highest sacrifice have full access to the spirit world of the

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ancestral ghosts around whose cult the ritual which takes place in the dancing-ground centres.

Turning our backs now on the Lower Side, let us, with the aid of the panoramic view seen in the Frontispiece and Plates II and III, survey the high place where the chief sacrifices take place. From end to end the ground is about 300 feet long. Along the whole of the Upper Side, built on the slight elevation which forms one side of the valley, is a continuous platform of coral blocks carefully fitted together, rising to a height of 10 to 12 feet from the ground. This, though in appearance a continuous structure, is in fact a succession of contiguous stone-platforms on which the most important tusked boars are sacrificed.[1] On the extreme left is the enormous banyan tree already mentioned, some of the aerial roots of which have been carved away so as to form a kind of cave within the tree, where, on a part of the stone-platform rather lower than the rest, cannibal feasts were formerly held.

To the right of this in front of the stone-platform is a small dolmen and other upright stones, and to the right of these again stands proudly the orchestra of upright slit gongs, huge trunks of forest trees transported from the mainland, hollowed out through a longitudinal slit so as to leave only a thin shell of the original trunk. Above the slit is carved an image representing the face of the ancestral ghost, whose voice speaks when the gong is sounded by hitting one side of the slit with a soft-wood stick. The nose of the image is pierced, and from it hang the jaws of the tusked pigs sacrificed in its honour on the day of consecration. The tallest of these gongs is about 12 feet high, not counting the base buried in the ground. Since no sacred object is ever removed, but simply allowed to rot where it stood, the remains of old gongs are also seen, two leaning to the right, one lying in front, now used as a seat for casual use. Four different sizes of gongs go to make up an orchestra, and the complicated and indescribably stirring rhythms they beat out are the wonder of all who have the good fortune to hear them.[2]

Beyond the gongs, supported on three stakes, is a rack displaying the jaws of tusked pigs recently sacrificed in one of the innumerable performances that go to make up the protracted Maki rite. To the right of this is another small dolmen, and beyond this again is a cylindrical cane structure set up to protect a special yam and banana tree planted during the mortuary rites for an old man.[3]

To the right of these again are three large dolmens. These, as will be described later,[4] were erected at successive performances of the Maki rite (as in the case of gongs, no sacred stone object is ever removed), and are the stone altars at which other important tusked pigs are sacrificed.

[1] For details of the sacrifices performed here and at the other stones see pp. 413 ff., 430.
[2] For details see pp. 311 ff.
[3] See p. 550.
[4] See p. 414.

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Of these three, the latest to have been erected is still surmounted by the rotting remnants of the shrine with which all monuments are covered when in use, and faced with the ancestor-image which forms the fore-post of the shrine. Beyond these is another rack displaying the jaws of sacrificed tuskers, behind which is yet another disused dolmen, and finally, a monolith erected during the course of the rites at which high-grade tusked boars have been sacrificed and which is now both the memorial and dwelling-place of ancestral ghosts.

The ghamal.

Dominating the whole scene, behind the stone-platforms and partly hidden by trees, is a long thatched wooden building, nearly 100 feet in length, open at each end, and with its ridge-poles decorated at either end with a gigantic image of a hawk with spread wings cut from the buttress roots of a forest tree. This is the central village lodge, or *ghamal*, the roofed counterpart of the dancing-ground, where the old men congregate in bad weather for debates, and where all business connected with the Maki is conducted. This building, too tall to be included in the panorama, can be studied in Plate VII and Fig. 53. Part of the bamboo fence surrounding it is to be seen, however, on the panorama towards the right-hand side above the stone-platform. This *ghamal* had been erected only a short time before my arrival. As with the gongs and other sacred objects, no *ghamal*, even when past use, is ever pulled down, as may be seen by the rotting roof of the previous, now deserted, building seen at the extreme right hand of the picture.

Story of origin.

The spot we now stand on is that on which, according to legend, the creator-deity Ta-ghar founded the village of Pete-hul, by causing a certain fruit to fall which, splitting on the buttress root of a tree, gave rise to the first man and woman, and here their first son cleared away the bush to make his dancing-ground.[1] Behind, in the cliff flanking the north-western coast, is a series of caves called *mbarang*, the largest of which is behind the Upper Side of the dancing-ground where the creation took place, and it is for this reason that this quarter of the village is called *La-mbarang*, meaning "At the Cave."[2]

Togh-vanu and Tolamp.

Leaving this sacred place now by its northern end, we find ourselves surrounded on all sides by houses. This is one of the centres of the village,

[1] See pp. 82, 89.

[2] The sides of the ravine leading to the cave are planted with coconut trees stretching right up to the great banyan tree already seen. Speiser (3, p. 92) refers to huts built partly under the rocks, and says that the natives sometimes make fires and cook there.

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from which paths go in all directions to the various dwelling enclosures. The great way now makes a right-angle turn towards the east. We are now on the low flat summit of the island. Following this road, in a few minutes we find ourselves in a new dancing-ground, half as long again as that of Pete-hul, giving a broad sense the other lacks, but at the same time being less compact, since there is here no natural arena. This is in fact two dancing-grounds joined end to end. In order to explain the existence of these dancing-grounds it is necessary to anticipate to some extent the chapters on Social Organisation by saying that, soon after the creation of Pete-hul, certain elements from this village seceded to found an offshoot village named Togh-vanu. These two together now form one patrilineally exogamous double-village called Pete-hul–Togh-vanu, which occupies the whole of the west Side of the Island. Each of these has its own dancing-ground, but that of the offshoot village Togh-vanu has been added to by the intrusion of an alien element, the survivors from Tolamp, one of the submerged islands already mentioned. These folk, having for some generations subsisted on the mainland, became finally so reduced in numbers that they could no longer support themselves as an independent community, and the last remnants of them, claiming kinship with the inhabitants of Togh-vanu, finally settled on Vao where the Togh-vanu folk gave them land and allowed them to build a new dancing-ground end to end with theirs.

Each of these two dancing-grounds has its own set of stone monuments, similar to those already seen at Pete-hul, and its own set of gongs. The westernmost, that which we enter first, belongs to Tolamp, the easternmost to Togh-vanu. Fig. 2 and Plates XIV, XV, XVII and XVIII illustrate some of the stone monuments belonging to Togh-vanu.

Towards the end of this dancing-ground a way leads down to the sea at the southern end of the beach called Kowu from which we have come, and which Togh-vanu is thus seen to share with its parent-village Pete-hul. This way also on approaching the beach divides into two, one path for the women and another for the men. We will not, however, go down this path, but will continue along the great way through the centre of the island which follows the slightly raised ridge that forms a minute watershed running across the island roughly from west to east.

Asymmetrical Division of the Island into Two unequal "Sides"

At the far end of Togh-vanu dancing-ground are more habitations, with paths radiating in all directions. At first sight these habitations, clustered together as they are, would appear to belong to one village. But they do not. Between them there runs an invisible line, here marked by a path but elsewhere by nothing, which divides off one side of Vao

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from the other, one side containing the double village of Pete-hul–Togh-vanu (to which Tolamp has attached itself) through which we have just come, and the other containing the four remaining villages of the island paired into two double-villages called respectively Peter-ihi–Venu and

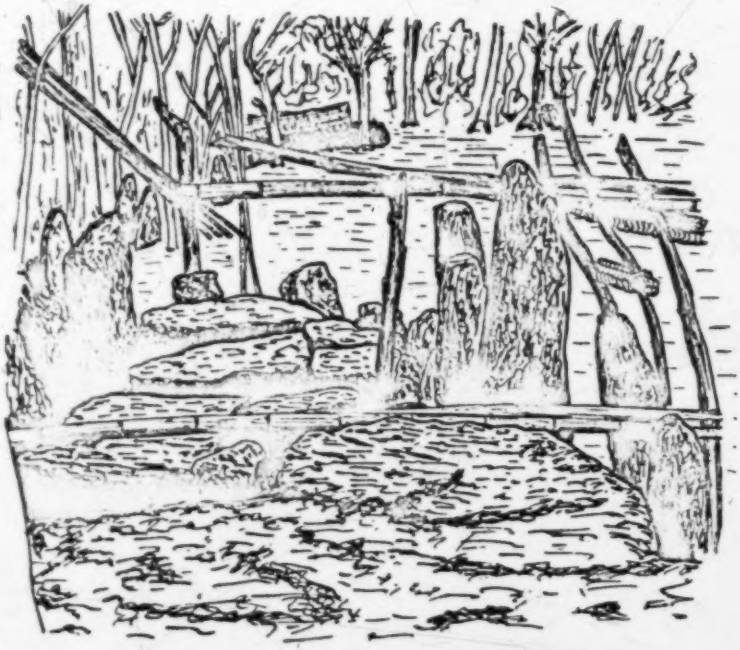

FIG. 2

View of some of the dolmens and monoliths behind the racks displaying the jaws of tusked boars at Togh-vanu seen in Plate XVII. The backs of two of these racks, rather inadequately represented owing to their foreshortened position, are seen to the extreme right. The drawing is made from a position on the table-stone of one of the dolmens. The stakes and transverse bamboos in the centre are the remains of the now rotted roofs once forming part of the shrines erected over the dolmens. To the left are some fresh bamboos ready for the construction of the shrine over the stone-platform seen in Plate XVIII. In the background towards Peter-ihi are the wall and surmounting fence surrounding a house-enclosure.

Singon–Norohure. This asymmetrical dual organisation will be described in the following chapter, and the forces giving rise to it in the sections on Kinship.

Peter-ihi–Venu.

To the superficial eye there is, however, no visible division, and, after passing a single house-enclosure on either side of the way we find our-

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selves almost immediately in the dancing-ground of Peter-ihi. Here, though in its general configuration this dancing-ground is similar to those we have already seen, the individual monuments are strikingly different. In the first place there is no great wall of contiguous stone-platforms on the Upper Side, but in its place a number of much smaller individual stone-platforms; and, in addition, the place of the great dolmen erected for each Maki in Pete-hul and Togh-vanu is taken by a number of composite structures each formed of a small dolmen with a monolith immediately behind it, surmounted by a roof the ridge-pole of which is supported in front by an ancestor-image and which is itself carved to represent the head and wings of a hawk. These monuments form part of the new form of Maki derived from the mainland villages of Lawor and Bot-walim and recently introduced from Atchin into all the villages on this side of Vao.

Pursuing our way through this dancing-ground, we first pass through a derelict dancing-ground called Patigh, and then emerge on yet another well-kept one belonging to the offshoot village of Peter-ihi, called Venu, whence yet another way goes down to the sea at a beach on the southern coast, separated from that of Kowu by a sandy point. This beach belongs jointly to Peter-ihi and Venu, each of which has its own way down, divided at the end into two paths.

Singon–Norohure.

From the dancing-ground of Venu the great way, now much reduced, leads to yet two more villages, Singon and its offshoot village Norohure, in which also we see monuments of the newer type. Of these the most easterly is Singon, philologically the same word as the Atchin *tsüngon* meaning "lip" or "promontory," this village being so called because it includes in its territory the most easterly portion of the island, a bluff formed of coral rocks which appear to be piled one on top of the other, called Singon Marev, meaning "Broken Lip" or, as we should say, "Broken Ness," humorously translated by Godefroy as "*geule cassée.*" [1]

Westward of this bluff is yet another beach, where the men of these two villages keep their canoes.

Le-siwar beach and fighting-ground.

Having reached this seaward extremity of the island, the easiest way back to where we came from is by way of the southern shore. This is for the most part fringed with coral sand, save for a small rocky point, on rounding which we find ourselves on the beaches called Lirövv and Le-siwar, used by the men of Peter-ihi and Venu, where the invisible line separating the two Sides of the Island approaches the shore. Le-siwar was formerly a fighting-ground on which set combats used to occur

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 30.

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361 [797] between these two Sides. Close to this now stands the Roman Catholic Mission, and separating this beach from Kowu is a sandy spit now called by the white men Point Vidil, after the Mission founder, who died on the island on Easter Eve 1898.[1]

BRIEF NOTE ON EVERYDAY LIFE

512 If in the cool season, we may now rest awhile on any one of these beaches, watching the still splendour of the tropic noon or, at low tide, minute blue fishes swimming in the pools. Small girls, perhaps, will pass looking for shellfish on the reef, or an occasional old woman seat herself beneath a shady tree on the shore side to plait.

During most seasons of the year it would be possible during the middle of the day to walk from one end of the island to the other without seeing a soul, save, maybe, for old women too feeble to work, old men who, after a recent performance of the Maki rite, have taken vows to stay at home, together with their wives who now must feed them since they are too holy to touch their own food, small children, or a young man sick with yaws. Everyone else is busy on the mainland, and the Small Island is empty of human life.

But, if we wait till the late afternoon, a very different scene meets our eyes. Now, one by one, canoes laden with produce put out from the mainland creeks, each making for its own landing-place on Vao. Bananas, yams, green "native cabbage," mangoes, mammy apples, perhaps a flying fox, fish caught in traps (there is no hook-and-line fishing), parcels of sundry foods tied up in green leaves, all are unloaded amidst laughter and a general sense of well-being after a cheerful day. Canoes are dragged ashore. Children and young boys bathe, shouting and slapping the water to keep off stray sharks. The women carry the produce homeward. The men see to the gear. Parties enquire from one another how the day has fared. And so, with endless delays, gradually the beaches empty and the villages become alive.

House-enclosures.

342 592 Within the village[2] each married man possesses an enclosure, fenced round with stones usually surmounted by a high screen of interwoven

[1] Père Vidil died from eating a dish of crayfish that had gone bad. His death was wrongly attributed to the malignity of the Vao folk, who were accused of having poisoned the crayfish. Mgr. Douceré hotly denies this imputation (see Douceré, pp. 202 ff.).

[2] This paragraph is based on my knowledge of conditions on Atchin, where I made detailed records of the arrangements inside the house-enclosures which I did not repeat on Vao. A much fuller description, together with native terms, will be given in a later volume. So far as I know, the conditions described here do not differ greatly from those on Vao, though the organisation into Lodges given in the following paragraph differs considerably from that on the remaining Small Islands.

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to the fact that they acquired many of the chief Maki rites from the mainland of Malekula before these were acquired on Vao, they hold, despite their small numbers, a very special position on the island. Their history is recorded in Chapter XXII.

(*b*) The two former communities of Lavame, which has only three surviving members, also now living at Togh-vanu, and Handillagh, which is extinct. Lavame formerly possessed two dancing-grounds. The now deserted dancing-ground marked in Map III as being on the path leading from Le-siwar to Togh-vanu is probably one of these. The inhabitants formerly had close kinship ties with the mainland village of Le-huru. A tale dealing with the quarrel between Lavame and Handillagh is given on p. 80.

(*c*) The refugee community of Le-se-kere, of which only one man survives.

None of these, however, affect the essential organisation of the island, and they may therefore be left out of account here, with the passing remark that the confusion in the stories regarding the origin of the various Vao villages cited in the next chapter may well have arisen partly through a number of refugee communities attaching themselves to existing villages and so giving rise to contradictory legends.

I will confine myself in this chapter to a description of the overt social organisation, so far as I recorded it, of the six villages into which the native Vao population is divided.

Dancing-grounds.

Every Vao village possesses one dancing-ground,[1] called *ne-sar*,[2] which is the focal point of the village, the place where the stone-platforms, dolmens and monoliths, and gongs connected with the Maki, are set up, and the scene of the chief Maki rites. Though in the centre of the village and not guarded by any physical barrier, no woman may set foot on the soil of a dancing-ground except during certain dances and rites connected

[1] There are exceptional cases in which one village has two dancing-grounds (see pp. 61, 89).

[2] Sometimes referred to as *le-sar*, using the locative particle *le-* in place of the indefinite article *ne-*. The use of this word for dancing-ground, shared also by the adjacent Malekulan coastal villages, is, so far as I know, unique in the Malekulan area in which, as also on the remaining Small Islands and in Ambrim, the usual term used for it is some form of the word (*h*)*amal*, which in its turn is related to *ghamal* (see footnote p. 60). The root *sar* is, however, used in this sense also in South-East Oba, where in the district of Lologharo the word for dancing-ground is *sare*, in Losigwei *na-sar*, and in Lol-mangwe *sara* (Layard, 9). In South Raga it is *sar* (Tattevin, 1, 1926, p. 377). In Vanua Lava "a man may plant a cycas in his garden as a sign that it is *sare tamate*, i.e. the lodge or resting-place of a *tamate*" (Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 89). Dr. Capell suggests that the word is probably derived from the Indonesian *saghep*, "to sweep." Compare Mota *sara*, meaning both "court," "open space," and "to sweep"; *sarag*, "to wipe away"; *sarav*, "to rub," etc. By extension, *sara* also means "to gather, bring together," and *sargag* "to assemble" (Codrington, 2).

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with the presentation of tusked boars. Here, men rule supreme, and here the main sacrifices to the ancestors take place. This is the spot from which each village is said to spring, and in all native accounts of the foundation of any village the construction of the dancing-ground is the founder's first act.

Ghamal.

Close to the dancing-ground is the largest building in the village, called *ghamal*.[1] This is the roofed counterpart of the dancing-ground, being the centre for all such business connected with the Maki as needs protection from the weather. This also is sacred to men, no woman being allowed, save on certain specified occasions, to set foot across the fence surrounding it. The word *ghamal* is clearly connected with the Banks Islands *gamal*, and the intimate association of this structure with the dancing-ground is seen in the use of the word itself, since in Atchin the corresponding word *amal* is actually used for the dancing-ground, while the Initiation Lodge, which in Atchin occupies the same position with regard to the dancing-ground as does the *ghamal* on Vao, is called *lol-hamal*, meaning "in the midst of the (*h*)*amal*." Variations of this same word are applied throughout Malekula and Ambrim alternatively for the dancing-ground or for the structure connected with it.[2] It is probably the same word as *Mal*, the title taken by the chief sacrificer in the Maki rites throughout this area. This title is connected with the verb *pal*, "to

[1] Usually combined with the indefinite article as *na-ghamal*.

[2] Instances of the use of this term for MEN'S-HOUSE or LODGE are:
Banks Islands, *gamal* (Codrington, Rivers).
Torres Islands, *gamel* (Rivers, 1, vol. I, p. 185).
Oba, *gamali* (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 232).
Santo (St. Philip's and St. James' Bay), *gamali* (ibid.).
" (Nogugu), *na-gamal*, *na-gomali* (Deacon, 3, p. 473).
" (" and Epi), *komal*, *komali*, *komel* (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 233).
South Raga (Pornowol), *mal* (Tattevin, 1, 1927, p. 427).
Ambrim (Sulol), *himel* (Rivers, 3), *imel* (Deacon, 3, p. 512).
Malekula (Seniang), *na-amel* (Deacon, 4, glossary).
" (Lambumbu), (*g*)*amal* (ibid.).
" (Lagalag), *hamal* (ibid.).
" (Big Nambas), *ghamal* (ibid.).
" (Port Sandwich), *amil* (Rivers, 1, vol. II, p. 233).
" (Aulua), *n'amal*, *n'amel* (ibid.).
West Epi (Burumba), *gomali* (Deacon, 3, p. 504).

Instances of the use of the term for DANCING-GROUND all come from Malekula and Ambrim, and are:
Malekula (Atchin), *amal* (where *lol-hamal* means "Initiation Lodge") (Layard, 9).
" (Wala), *n'amil* (ibid.).
" (Lambumbu), *na-amel* (Deacon, 4, glossary).
" (Lagalag), *hamil* (="sacred place of clan") (ibid.).
Ambrim (Sulol), *hemel* (where *himel* means Men's-House) (Rivers, 3).

In the Small Islands of Malekula, other than Vao, this meaning has become extended yet further, in that many VILLAGES themselves are called *emil*, with a qualifying adjective, e.g. on Atchin, *Emil Parav* (long), *Emil Marur* (narrow), *Emil Lap* (great).

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sacrifice" or "to be sacrificed,"[1] and the sanction for the structure's sacredness is the human sacrifice which, together with the sacrifice of tusked boars, forms an essential feature of the consecration rite performed when it is built.[2]

It would appear, therefore, that the word *ghamal*, or *amal*, as used either for the dancing-ground or for the roofed structure associated with it, should properly be rendered "Place of Sacrifice."

The numerous functions of the *ghamal* will appear during the course of this work. It will suffice here to mention some of the most important. We have already noted its sacredness to men, that is to say to those who have performed the Maki rite, and have thus during their lifetime taken on some of the holiness of ancestors. Each man has his own place,[3] marked by his sleeping-mat (*tambaghar*) and by his earth-oven, at which either he or his sons cook his meals. Here all those who have performed the chief Maki sacrifice must sleep during the thirty-day period following the rite, eating of food specially cooked by their wives, though the most elaborate precautions are taken that this food shall not come into contact with that eaten by women.[4] Warriors also sleep in the *ghamal* before intended battle. Here also are made the masks and other perishable objects used in the special dances called *na-lepg*,[5] and new gongs are hollowed out, accompanied by magic formulae. The most important feasts connected with the Maki are held here, and all decisions come to with regard to Maki rites. Here also debates are held at night, or when it rains, and young men are instructed by their elders in the history of the tribe.

End-to-end dancing-grounds.

It has been said above that each village has but one dancing-ground. This statement is true of all Vao villages with the exception of Peter-ihi, which has two dancing-grounds placed end to end. While in all other cases the dancing-ground goes by the same name as the village, the two dancing-grounds of Peter-ihi are called by different names, respectively *Etine* and *Norolu*. A similar arrangement is found in the Atchin village of Olep, where, however, one is called by the same name as the village, *Olep*, and the other *N'amal Para*, or "New Dancing-ground," of which Olep is the socially superior, and the "New Dancing-ground" the inferior.

This curious arrangement is explained by the natives to be due to historical reasons such as that accounting for the foundation of the double-

[1] Cf. the Indonesian *pamali*, *pemali*, *pomali*, meaning "sacred or taboo," used especially in connexion with the tabular sacrificial stone called *batu pomali* (similar to the sacrificial dolmen erected during the Vao Maki), closely connected with the Kakihan Society of West Ceram, which Deacon takes to be the prototype of Melanesian secret societies (Deacon, I, p. 340).

[2] This rite, a special form of Maki, is fully described in Chapter XVI, where a detailed description of the building is also given.

[3] *Meleleku*, "l'endroit où je couche" (Godefroy, I, 1933, p. 36).

[4] See p. 400.

[5] See p. 337.

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village of Pete-hul–Togh-vanu on Vao. According to this account, fully related below,[1] there was in the beginning only one village, Pete-hul, which was founded by two brothers, each of whom constructed his own dancing-ground, both being placed end to end as in the modern village of Peter-ihi. Later, owing to changes in the kinship system which will be fully discussed in Chapter VI, some of the descendants of the younger brother split off from the parent community to found the offshoot village of Togh-vanu by the construction of a separate dancing-ground some little distance away. I mention this here as a possible explanation of the existing two dancing-grounds end-to-end at Peter-ihi, the reason for which I omitted to enquire into on the spot.[2]

"Sides of the Stone."

We have already noted (1) the division of the island into two moieties, and (2) that of each double-village into two twin-villages.

The next sub-division to be recorded is that of the population of each village into two yet further patrilineal moieties called *tosan na-vatu*. We have already met with the word *tosan* used by itself as referring to the two unnamed "Sides of the Island." Here also the word *tosan* means "side," and, combined with the word *na-vatu*, "stone," means "Side of the Stone." As in the case of the two "Sides of the Island," these two moieties are unnamed, members of each moiety referring to members of the other simply as *tosan na-vatu*, "Side (i.e. the other Side) of the Stone." [3]

Organisation of the Double-Village of Pete-hul–Togh-vanu on the Superior Side of the Island

Pete-hul founded by Ta-ghar.

What has been said above applies to every village on the island. With regard to the further dual divisions into which society is organised, we are faced with the fact of new disturbing influences from Atchin which have to some extent upset the old order.

[1] See p. 89.

[2] The situation in regard to Peter-ihi is, however, complicated by the fact that this village is already provided with an offshoot village, Venu. It would appear that the same process which caused the formation of the original offshoot village is again in operation, and that the parent village is once more in process of dividing into two.

[3] Natives of Vao automatically know to which Side of the Stone this phrase refers, since it must be that Side of the Stone in the speaker's own village to which he himself does not belong. When speaking to strangers, or of the Sides of the Stone in another village, distinction between the two Sides is made by referring specifically to the two Quarters (see p. 70 and Fig. 5) of which each Side is composed. Thus, in the case of Pete-hul, specific reference can only be made by speaking of one Side of the Stone as "*tosan na-vatu La-mbot-na-ninge, Nalu*," these being the names of the two Quarters composing one Side (see below), and of the other as "*tosan na-vatu La-mbet-ra, La-mbarang*."

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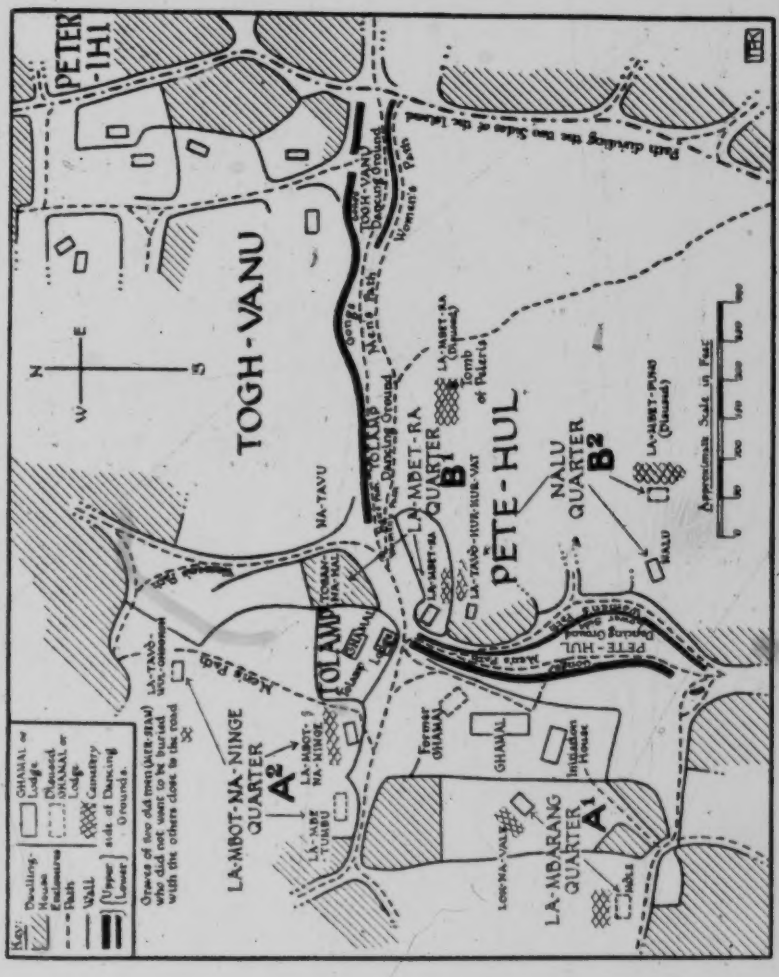

MAP IV

Central Region of the Double-village of Pete-hul–Togh-vanu on the Superior Side of Vao.
Note the 4 Quarters of Pete-hul, A¹, A², B¹, B².

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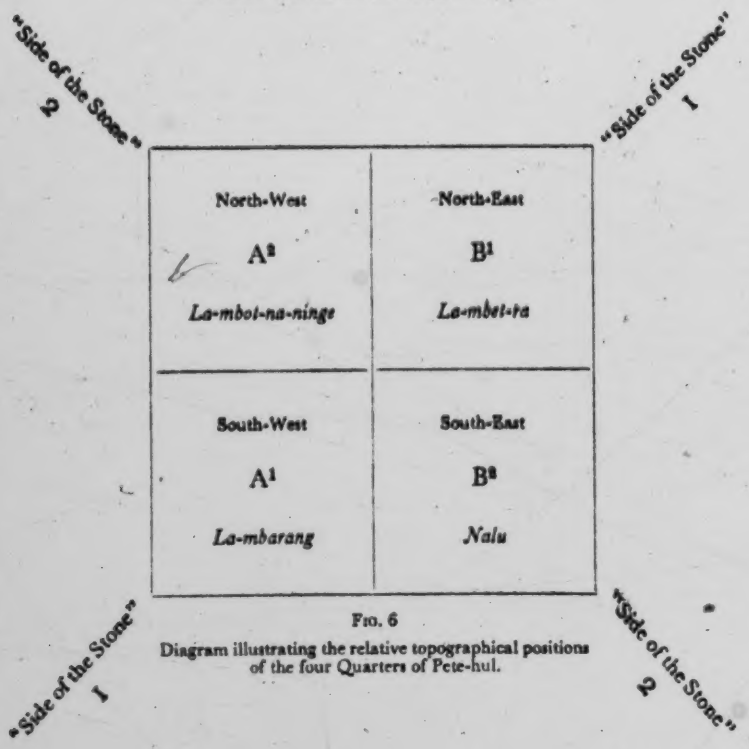

FIG. 6

Diagram illustrating the relative topographical positions of the four Quarters of Pete-hul.

moderating pull in the opposite direction owing to mutually opposing loyalties. For, just as each Side of the Stone is geographically divided into two parts which could not join forces without encountering opposition on either flank, so also the two moieties A and B, though each forming a cohesive bloc, are apt to find aggression difficult owing to the fact that each contains a section of one Side of the Stone having friends and allies in the other.

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Owing to the inadequacies of my sketch-map, the exact boundaries of the Quarters are not shown, but we have it in the words of Godefroy that "Each group of families (i.e. each Quarter) builds its houses parallel to those of its neighbouring group, leaving between them a space about two metres wide. The families surround their houses . . . with high palisades called *bakral*, giving them the aspect of fortresses. These palisades are in addition reinforced at the base with walls made of dry stones a metre or more high. The result of this is that the establishments of

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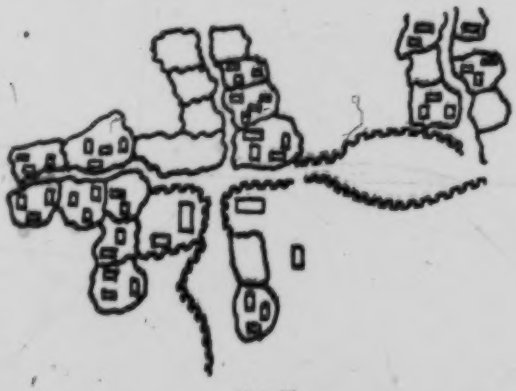
two groups of families built parallel to one another and enclosed and surrounded by walls combine to form a long and more or less tortuous street not unlike those of ancient villages in Europe." [1] This aspect of town-planning on Vao is illustrated also in the rough plan drawn by Speiser reproduced in Map V. Godefroy does not discuss the details of social organisation, nor does he mention the existence of Quarters as social institutions, though he is sufficiently struck by the appearance of the houses to say that they resemble the "quarters" [2] of a town. I quote his remarks here not only because they could not be bettered as a description of what an observant visitor actually sees, but in order to emphasise the fact that, like the two Sides of the Island, though always potential



MAP V

Adapted from Speiser's rough plan of Pete-hul including parts of Tegh-vasu and Peser-ihi (Speiser, 3, Plate 10, No. 6), showing arrangement of house-enclosures.

rivals, and even on occasion enemies, the Quarters do actually approach one another as close as they can in virtue of the collaboration which underlies all rivalry.

One further fact, not very well illustrated in either sketch-plan, is the process of decentralisation that is apt to take place in all Small Island villages. Thus the central part of the village, as witnessed particularly by the now disused cemeteries of *La-mbet-ra* and *La-mbet-pung*, used to be thickly populated, each cemetery having its own Lodge with the

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 36. He adds that the place where the four streets meet is called *gamal*. In most villages, such as Pete-hul, the *gamal* is obscured by other topographical features. The best example is in the village of Norohure.

[2] Godefroy used this term, as he thought, in a purely figurative sense, as it is used nowadays in Europe, not realising that the Quarters are actualities in Pete-hul. The European use of the term recalls the fact that Quarters were once actualities in Europe too.

1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
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dwelling-enclosures of the Lodge members clustered close around. As the cemeteries where old men are buried increased in size, and as, moreover, the number of burials of young men, women and children inside their dwelling-houses grew also, the original sites tended to be abandoned and new Lodges and cemeteries (such as that of the existing *La-mbet-ra* shown on the plan), as well as new dwelling-houses, began to be built rather further afield. This tendency has not, however, reached the point achieved in the Atchin double-village of Ruruar, which, as will be shown in a later volume, has now become so decentralised that the dwelling-enclosures form a kind of irregular ring round the site of the original village, which is now occupied exclusively by the cemeteries with their accompanying Lodges.

Women's Lodges

While the above account refers almost exclusively to the overt patrilineal organisation of the island, it is of interest to note the existence at the same time of Women's Lodges recorded by Godefroy on Vao, but not existing, so far as I know, elsewhere in the Small Islands.

Referring to a "large carefully guarded enclosure at the base of a slope" in which there are "five or six houses, well kept and with the ground around them carefully cleaned and even swept," Godefroy says: [1] "This collection of houses so carefully fenced . . . is strictly reserved for women. It is there that the matrons of Pete-hul and of Togh-vanu receive women of these same clans when they are about to give birth. The midwife of these two clans is assisted by their close relatives,[2] and together they give, or rather lavish care upon them over a period of three weeks. At the end of this time the mother or the grandmother of the woman who has given birth to the child comes, with other relatives, to take away the mother and her baby and bring them back to her own home." Thus "women also have places which are taboo to men. It is a fact that no men are allowed within this enclosure, and, I may add, only such women as have themselves been born there have the right of entry. A mother who has given birth there, but was not herself born there, is rigorously excluded excepting during the period of her confinement. It is for this reason that the place is called 'the birth enclosure,' [3] *hu ni-ar na woruan*. . . . It is quite simply a native lying-in ward." [4]

Special interest attaches to the name by which this enclosure is called. The term *hu ni-ar* is in fact composed of two words, *hu* which I have recorded in Vao as *hu-hu*, meaning "to suckle" or "to be suckled," [5] and *ni-ar* meaning "a fence." *Woruan* is clearly another spelling for the word

[1] Godefroy, 1, 1933, p. 230.
[2] Presumably of the women in labour.
[3] "*Enclos de la naissance.*"
[4] "*Maternité.*"
[5] See p. 178. Compare Mota *hu-hu*, "to give suck."

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PLATE XV

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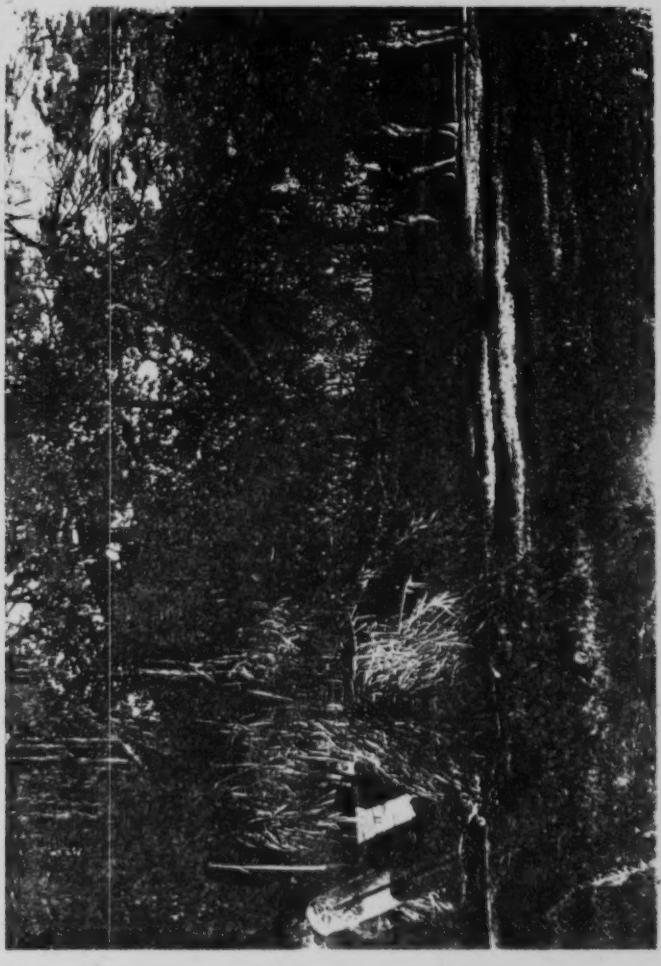

Part of Tegh-vanu dancing-ground before weeding. On the extreme left is one of the gongs seen in Plate XIV

[facing p. 363]

3: Harrisson N-5 (1934-1935) 1936
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Big Nambas

but they do not attempt to help the heathens, unless the heathens come down to the often unhealthy coast and adopt the externals of Christianity. The Missions do not go to the natives, and in Santo, Malekula, and Malo, out of about six thousand Christians, only thirty live away from the sea. In the hills there is no malaria, consumption, or elephantiasis; when the hill-men come to the sea they quickly go down with fever, and the slightest additional sickness will kill them. Mission history is a ghastly list of great settlements created by the Missions on the coast, and now almost or entirely extinct. Aneityum, west Malekula, and west Santo show plenty of examples. I have already made the point that it is similarly fatal for missions to neglect their converts in outlying districts; this is done all over the group. The recruiters do the same

thing, only in a different way, by taking bush natives to work in plantations; they are more concerned to keep their men well, because if a man dies his tribe will not work for that recruiter any more. Long ago Anthony Trollope wrote a delightful account of the benefits due to Queensland blackbirding; Campbell (1874, p. 69), whose account of the southern isles in 1864 is lucid and unbiased, demonstrated the fallacy in Trollope's reasoning, and further pointed out that ex-plantation natives often become the most dangerous on their return to the bush, which is equally true to-day, especially of trained native police.

In my section of the Big Nambas I have shown that modern warfare, unlike the old form, is socially harmful; all natives should be disarmed; vigorous medical work started and maintained throughout the islands; the fish *Bam-*